

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 70

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor the life and memory of the late Iris Violet May Lawrence “Dixie” Hall of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Dixie Hall; and

WHEREAS, Iris Violet May Lawrence Hall, better known as Dixie Hall, was born and raised in England’s West Midlands, where she began writing poetry at a young age; and

WHEREAS, at the age of ten, she won a British Broadcasting Company (BBC) “Children’s Hour” program poetry contest, for which she got to travel to London and read her poem aloud on the radio; she attributed this moment in her life as the hallmark that sparked her interest in verse writing; and

WHEREAS, years later, while on a train to London, she met movie star Tex Ritter, who was taken with the young Mrs. Hall after she helped him deliver his music to EMI Records; and

WHEREAS, after EMI Records released Tex Ritter’s album in Europe, Nashville took notice of the young lady who helped him; Don Pierce of Starday Records offered her a job in promotion and publicity, and in 1961, she moved to the United States; and

WHEREAS, upon coming to Nashville, Dixie Hall lived with Mother Maybelle Carter of the first country music superstar ensemble, the Carter Family, who took her in and encouraged her to write; she began writing songs with Mother Maybelle under the name “Dixie Dean”; and

WHEREAS, it was during her time with the Carter Family that Dixie Hall met Johnny Cash, who asked Mrs. Hall if he could have two of her songs, “A Letter From Home” and “Troublesome Waters”; and

WHEREAS, Dixie Hall met her husband, Tom T. Hall, a fellow songwriter, at the 1964 BMI Country Awards; the two married in March of 1968; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hall wrote for country music publications for a time, including *Music City News*, of which she later became the editor; after marrying, she set songwriting aside for many years, focusing on charity work, raising and showing Bassett hounds, and working with Nashville's Humane Society; and

WHEREAS, after Tom T. Hall retired from the business in the 1990s, Dixie Hall resumed her songwriting and wrote a handful of songs for bluegrass singer Nancy Moore; after a time, her husband joined her once more and the two became a songwriting pair; and

WHEREAS, in addition to writing, Mrs. Hall built a state-of-the-art recording studio at their home and established the recording label Blue Circle Records and the publishing company Good Home Grown Music; and

WHEREAS, throughout her career as a songwriter, Dixie Hall wrote alone and co-wrote songs with her husband and with friends, including Jeanette Williams, Troy Engle, and Billy Smith; and

WHEREAS, in late 2014, Mrs. Hall finally recorded her first bluegrass single, a self-penned song titled "Sunny Flower One"; included with the single's online download is a message that reads, "This song is my gift to you. Running out of time here but it's your Earth, and your music. Please save it and give generously. God bless you forevermore. I love you."; and

WHEREAS, Dixie Hall was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, a devoted wife, Mrs. Hall shared loving companionship with her husband of forty-six years, Tom T. Hall; and

WHEREAS, Dixie Hall will be sadly mourned but fondly remembered by legions of admiring songwriters, recording artists, and fans; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hall leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, seldom do women of her stature walk among us, and it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly remember the bountiful life of this exceptional human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Iris Violet May Lawrence "Dixie" Hall, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Hall.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.